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REQUEST FOR INCLUSION OF AN ADDITIONAL ITEM ON THE AGENDA OF THE FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION

CONSOLIDATION OF THE REGIME ESTABLISHED BY THE TREATY FOR THE PROHIBITION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Letter dated 17 August 1992 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Mexico to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In accordance with the instructions of my Government, I have the honour to request, pursuant to rule 15 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, that an additional item be placed on the agenda for the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly entitled "Consolidation of the regime established by the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean".

In accordance with the provisions of rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, an explanatory memorandum concerning the request is attached (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly.

(Signed) Federico SALAS
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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ANNEX

Explanatory memorandum

1. In the absence of global negotiations on the total elimination of nuclear weapons and the reluctance of the nuclear Powers to renounce the possession of such weapons, the international community has set itself more modest objectives in an effort to halt and reverse the arms race, particularly in the nuclear sector. Unfortunately, even these measures have not always secured the support of all States and thus have not achieved the desired results. For example, the international community still has no effective juridical system to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Consequently, despite the fact that in recent years the military super-Powers have achieved significant reductions in their nuclear arsenals, these arsenals are today larger and more powerful than 20 years ago when the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons was signed.

2. Another measure repeatedly proposed by many countries in their efforts to rid themselves of the danger posed by nuclear weapons is the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in their regions. However, these initiatives have also failed to achieve the desired results. It is a source of great satisfaction to Mexico that it played a very active part in drawing up the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, known as the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which established the first nuclear-weapon-free zone in a densely populated region. The conclusion of the Treaty of Tlatelolco was recognized by the United Nations General Assembly as an event of historic significance in the efforts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and to promote international peace and security.

3. Of the 33 independent countries in the region located within the zone of application of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, 24 are now parties to it. In addition, the five States possessing nuclear weapons, to which Additional Protocol II is open, have undertaken in that Protocol to respect the statute of denuclearization of Latin America and the Caribbean in respect of warlike purposes and not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against the parties to the Treaty. In addition, within the zone of application of the Treaty there are some territories that, in spite of not being sovereign political entities, are nevertheless in a position to receive the benefits deriving from the Treaty through its Additional Protocol I, which is open to the four States that de jure or de facto are internationally responsible for those territories. The French Government has announced that it is giving favourable consideration to ratification of the Protocol, which it signed in 1979. If it does so the Protocol will then be in force for the four States to which it is open for signature.

4. Furthermore, certain Latin American countries in which the Treaty of Tlatelolco is still not in force have recently taken major steps which could lead to the full application of the Treaty in all countries within the zone of application provided for in article 4.

5. As the Depositary Government for the Treaty of Tlatelolco, the Mexican Government firmly intends to continue its efforts to ensure that the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean enters fully into force. The United Nations General Assembly has played a very important role in these efforts since 1967 when, in its resolution 2286 (XXII), it welcomed with special satisfaction the conclusion of the Treaty. The Government of Mexico is convinced that consideration of the item "Consolidation of the regime established by the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean" by the General Assembly, through its First Committee, would be vital in helping to ensure that the Treaty of Tlatelolco enters fully into force.